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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 001042

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DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S FRAZER

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [MOPS](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)
SUBJECT: Civil Society Meetings on Reconciliation

REF: Nairobi 1004

Classified by PolOff Hodan Hassan. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) Civil Society groups, and the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr clan, have met and discussed specific recommendations for the planned National Reconciliation Congress. In the meantime, the Transitional Federal Government is proceeding with plans for the Congress. President Yusuf announced a start date of April 16 for a two month Congress to be held in Mogadishu. End Summary.

Civil Society on the Reconciliation Congress

¶2. (SBU) Three major civil society umbrella organizations met in Mogadishu to discuss the upcoming national reconciliation congress. The groups participating in the meetings included Civil Society in Action (broad range of local NGOs), Inxaa (network of human rights organizations), and COGWA (network of women's groups). After three days of discussion and debate facilitated by the Mogadishu-based Center for Research and Democracy (CRD), the groups agreed upon a series of recommendations on the planning, convening and envisioned outcome of the congress. Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle, the Mogadishu-based Director of the Center for Research and Development, provided Post with a read-out of the meeting.

¶3. (SBU) The groups agreed upon the following items:

-- All participants must recognize the legitimacy of the transitional federal government (TFG);

-- The overall goals of the congress should include social reconciliation among clans/communities in conflict, the creation of a functioning representative government at all levels, and an agreed upon methodology for disarmament and demobilization campaigns;

-- There should be a preparatory meeting with key stakeholders to come to consensus on issues including delegate selection, guiding principles, and agenda items for the congress;

-- There may be the need to amend the transitional federal charter to address issues such as power-sharing arrangements and role of parliament;

-- Former members of the Islamic Courts should be allowed to participate in the congress;

-- A successful congress should pave the way for the departure of international peace-keepers from the country.

The final recommendations from the civil society meetings will be sent to the TFG Ministry of the Interior. The document will subsequently be disseminated to the wider public.

Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr Blueprint for Reconciliation

¶4. (SBU) Members of the Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr community in Mogadishu held a series of consultative meetings on the upcoming national reconciliation congress. The Ayr Political Leadership Council organized the meetings and compiled the recommendations in a document titled "Proposal for Genuine Somali National Reconciliation and Power-Sharing". The document was emailed to Post by the chairman of the council, Dr. Mohamed Uluso.

¶5. (SBU) According to the document, the Ayr political interests can best be served "in a broader framework of genuine reconciliation process for power-sharing and mechanism for dispensation of justice, respect of human rights, accountability and transparency. Therefore, it goes beyond unilateral, clan-based conflict resolution context and it focuses on holistic approaches in which we think that can best be achieved through a genuine reconciliation process."

The council put forward the following recommendations:

-- A consultative meeting, to take place no later than the second week of March, is urgently needed to convene in order to agree on the roadmap for the reconciliation process. The meeting should consist of well-known and respected members of civil society and business community.

-- Mogadishu is not the ideal venue for the congress because of the presence of TFG and Ethiopian forces;

-- A neutral UN mediator/facilitator should be appointed to lead the reconciliation process. The individual should be supported by assistants from the African Union and Arab League;

-- Each community should have the right to select their representatives in the congress;

-- The congress should produce a blueprint for establishing public administration and security institutions/forces at all levels of government;

-- Specific articles in the transitional federal charter should be reviewed to "close loopholes and eliminate contradictions and ambiguity."

-- Guidelines should be developed to determine the work of the TFG for the remaining two and one half years of its mandate.

-- TFG should allow for reasonable accommodation of moderate members of the Islamic Courts.

Mood in Mogadishu

¶6. (C) Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle, the Mogadishu-based Director of the Center for Research and Development, told PolOff the people of Mogadishu have an "appetite and desire" for reconciliation. According to Abdulle, people are desperately in need of leadership, but it is not there. People want to give the TFG a chance. They are not saying

"we hate the TFG," but rather "this government cannot deliver?. Abdulle stated President Yusuf?s claims that he will ?pacify? Mogadishu in the next three weeks have heightened people's security concerns in an already tense atmosphere. Given the increasingly publicized movements of a large number of Puntland militia into the south, such talk has lessened the public?s confidence that "reconciliation" will take place anytime soon.

TFG Plans for Reconciliation Congress

¶7. (C) The TFG is proceeding with its planning for a grand reconciliation congress, seemingly with little regard for input of civil society and clans. On March 2 President Yusuf announced in Baidoa before the Parliament that the reconciliation congress will be held in Mogadishu starting on April 16 and will continue for two months. Both Yusuf and Prime Minister Gedi have publicly said the conference will include about 3,000 people. According to PM Gedi, the congress will address issues of social reconciliation, with the expected outcome being "forgiveness." Gedi told the international community in Nairobi that political reconciliation took place in Kenya in 2004, and therefore it will not be part of the agenda.

Comment

¶8. (C) The recent flurry of meetings taking place in Mogadishu reflects the desire among various communities to provide their recommendations and input on the planning and convening of the national reconciliation congress. The meetings are also a response to the general lack of concrete information, or at times conflicting information, on the congress by the TFG. Possibly because the TFG is proceeding with its own agenda, recommendations from both the civil society and Hawiye/Haber Gedir/Ayr groups include a strong plea for the international community to play a robust role in supporting and monitoring the planning and convening of the congress.

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